

Minutes of the Board of Water Commissioners' Meeting

Monday, January 23, 2012

Present: Commissioners G. Van De Kreeke, R. Haen, A. Stewart, and J. Trueblood, Superintendent.

The meeting was called to order by G. Van De Kreeke, President, at 4:02 P.M. All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Haen, that the minutes of the December 12, 2011 meeting be approved as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports

Financial reports were not available due to end-of-year final accounting. They will be presented when available.

Superintendent's Report

Operations' Department Report

Superintendent reported that December pumpage was slightly down from 2010. The two new operators continue in training. So far, no intake icing has occurred, but normally this takes place in January or February. Roofing work is nearly complete. The Commissioners accepted the operations report as presented.

Construction Maintenance Department Report

Superintendent advised that the crew had replaced one fire hydrant on North Point Drive. One main break had been fixed. Survey work continued on Broadway and Indiana Avenue for future water main designs. The Commissioners accepted the construction maintenance report as presented.

Old Business

Old Business Presented By Commissioners

Commissioner Stewart asked if the phrase, "water bill" is still appropriate; perhaps "municipal bill" should be used instead.

Other Old Business

Discuss some thoughts from meter shop foreman on ramifications of residential fire sprinkling systems

Superintendent presented a summary sheet on the topic, which was raised by Commissioner Stewart in preceding meetings. The Utility's meter shop foreman had considered various aspects of the issue and discussed with superintendent. In general, residential fire suppression systems are considered to be an effective way to stop fires, use less water in putting out fires, and provide a higher level of safety. However, they are extensive systems; code seems to mostly apply to new construction, as the cost of retrofitting is exorbitant. One major issue with such systems is whether or not they should be metered. Generally practice is that a larger service (2") is run from the main into the home, where it branches into a domestic and a fire service. Metering the fire service requires a larger, more expensive meter; some low flow metering capability is also lost in a standard nutating disc water meter. A magmeter might eliminate this problem, but also comes at a price and requires electrical hookup. If the fire service is not metered, then some type of flow alarm is usually installed, along with a backflow preventer. Commissioner Stewart asked if the Utility would be prepared if a customer requested to have a residential fire sprinkling system. Superintendent felt the decision would come down to whether or not to require the fire system to be metered. Most commercial fire systems are not metered. However, in a residential setting it might be simpler to meter the fire system to avoid a separate flow alarm system. Superintendent reported that he was seeking input from the City Plumbing Inspector, as well.

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Discuss and ask Board approval to purchase Warranty Plus service plan for new turbidimeters

Superintendent presented information from the Hach Company on their warranty plan for our new turbidimeters. This had been included in a previous meeting but was denied by the Board. Superintendent later realized that the plan included the chemicals and calibration service for the units. Basically, to purchase the calibration chemicals separately would cost more than the warranty plan, but this was not understood earlier. After discussion, Commissioner Van De Kreeke made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Stewart, to accept the proposal at a cost of \$10,444.50. The motion passed unanimously.

Update Board on rate case

Superintendent stated that the public hearing had taken place earlier during the week. An article had also appeared in the local newspaper. Superintendent anticipates that the state will approve the increase early in February. The Utility will still have among the lowest water rates in the state.

Update Board on implementation of garbage fee

Superintendent informed the Board that the fiscal department had been working hard to prepare the garbage fees. The City's IT department had provided the basic information, but this had to be modified and checked by Utility staff. The fee should appear on bills going out in January. Superintendent reminded the Board members that the Utility allocates a portion of expenses to this new service, but these expenses are not new and would otherwise be fully allocated to sewer and water.

New Business

Business to be presented by Commissioners

There was none.

Other New Business

Discuss and ask Board approval to purchase water meters and radio transmitters for 2012

Superintendent presented a proposal from Badger meter for the yearly supply of 300 Recordall M25 Orion units, a 6" mag meter, two 3" mag meters, 1080 RTR and Orion 5/8" units, and various other disc and chamber repair kits, and element replacements, totaling \$197,967.50. Commissioner Haen made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Van De Kreeke, to approve the purchase. Motion passed unanimously.

Discuss and ask Board approval to purchase replacement excavator and skidsteer

Superintendent reported that the Utility's Komatsu excavator is more than ten years old and showing signs of age in loss of power and ongoing maintenance costs. The construction maintenance department researched several possible replacement units including a Volvo, Caterpillar, and John Deere rubber tired excavator. Staff members tried out each unit. The Volvo and Caterpillar were acceptable, but the John Deere had numerous failings. The proposals came in as follows: 2012 JD 220 D W at a total price of \$169,969; Volvo EW210D at \$169,975, and a Cat M322 DQ at \$204,900; all including trade-in of the Komatsu PW170. Commissioner Stewart asked about a used unit. After discussion, Superintendent advised that the Utility has acquired used equipment, including our large dump truck; but, in this case, he would recommend purchasing a new unit. Because the total was considerably below the budgeted amount, Superintendent also raised the possibility of purchasing a skidsteer this year rather than pushing that item into next year's budget. Commissioner Haen made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Stewart, to purchase the Volvo excavator at \$169,975. Motion passed unanimously.

Discuss and ask Board approval for purchase of used forklift

Superintendent informed the Board that staff members had been working with Fischer's Fleet Service to obtain a used forklift in good working condition. Fischer recently obtained a used 2004 Toyota forklift and man basket. Utility staff had inspected the unit and found it to be in good working order. Superintendent advised that the unit will reduce the need for staff members to climb long ladders and manipulate heavy parts into a lifting crate in the garage. Commissioner Van De Kreeke made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Stewart, to approve purchase of the used forklift at a cost of \$5,000. Motion passed unanimously.

Discuss and ask Board approval for removal of asbestos in the pipe gallery

Superintendent informed the Board that staff had discovered asbestos-covered steam pipes in an elevated area of the pipe gallery. As we are trying to work on corroded pipe stands, we need to remove the asbestos in a safe manner. Commissioner Haen made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Van De Kreeke, to approve a proposal from Advanced Asbestos Removal for 380 LF pipe insulation and 130 SF of 3' diameter pipe insulation at a total fee of \$8,290. Motion passed unanimously.

Correspondence

There was no additional correspondence.

Approve Vouchers

Motion by Commissioner Van De Kreeke, seconded by Commissioner Haen, that gross payroll of \$142,825.76, and the general vouchers of \$212,467.74 be allowed and approved. Motion passed unanimously.

Personnel

Update Board on operations department staffing and operator vacancy

Superintendent advised the Board that the training for the two new operators is underway. Bill Swearingen has also assumed his new role as an operations foreman.

Other Matters

Commissioner Van De Kreeke mentioned that he had been in contact with Alderman Hammond regarding the Utility's 2012 budget and any concerns of the Finance Committee.

February Board Meeting

The next Board Meeting will be on Monday, February 20, 2012, at 4:00 P.M. in the Utility conference room.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:10 PM on a motion by Commissioner Haen, seconded by Commissioner Stewart. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes taken by:
Superintendent
Joe R. Trueblood

Raymond W. Haen, Secretary